

REMARKS

In response to the Advisory Action dated August 11, 2003, Applicant herewith files an RCE to include the above amendments.

It is noted that two Interview Summary reports were included with the August 11 Advisory Action. The Interview Summary for a teleconference dated July 2, 2003, requested a written summary from Applicant. Applicant notes that a written summary of the July 2 teleconference was provided in the document entitled Request for Reconsideration so as to comply with the written summary requirement. The Interview Summary for a teleconference between the Examiner and Mr. Earp dated August 1, 2003, also requested a written summary from Applicant. While a discussion of the August 1 teleconference was presented in the document entitled Second Request for Reconsideration, in summary, the August 1 teleconference between the Examiner and Mr. Earp was directed to discussions regarding the submission of the "directly on" limitation as consideration for overcoming the Gibbons patent as well as providing the previously offered limitation specifying the function of the polymeric material layer.

In anticipation of receiving a request for a written summary for the final teleconference with the Examiner dated August 27, 2003, Applicant herein provides in summary that the Examiner and Mr. Earp discussed providing the previously submitted, and currently offered, amendments for submission with an RCE. The Examiner indicated that a new search would be performed specifically addressing the claim limitations as presented herein and it is anticipated that the amendments provided herein will overcome all identified references.

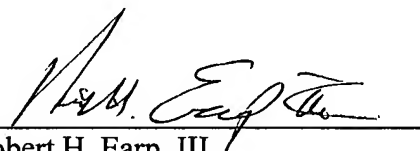
It is noted that since the amendments provided in the First and Second Request for Reconsideration were not entered, the amendments provided herein are made to the claims as pending in the Final Office Action. As provided herein, Applicant amends each of independent

claims 1, 48, 52, 60, and 62 to clarify that the first polymeric layer is deposited “directly on” at least a portion of the article and that the article is formed from plastic, ceramic, or metal. Such amendments are offered to address the Examiner’s concerns regarding the definition of “on” and to clarify that the first polymeric layer of the present invention is deposited directly on the article and not on an intermediate adhesive layer. The purpose of the first polymeric layer to provide a leveling effect to the article is provided by amendment to further clarify why the polymeric layer must be deposited directly on the article.

Finally, the Examiner addressed concerns over the article composition not being defined in the claims and requested additional clarification thereof. Therefore, Applicant has provided the limitation in the independent claims that the article is formed from plastic, ceramic, or metal as supported in the specification. Such a limitation is believed to further distinguish the present invention over the prior art. Such a limitation appears to be properly clear and definitive as a proper alternative expression under MPEP 2173.05(h)(II). Other amendments provided herein are provided for the purpose of clarity.

Undersigned counsel is most appreciative of the Examiner's courtesy and assistance in the several teleconferences regarding this matter. And while Applicant believes the comments and amendments presented herein should address the Examiner's concerns and properly place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to call undersigned counsel should any questions or comments arise regarding the examination or allowance of the claims as presented.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. H. Earp, III", written over a horizontal line.

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